

1.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SURROUNDING AREA

The proposed Project is to add needed parking area at the Dark Day Launching Facility, which is located on New Bullards Bar Reservoir in northeast Yuba County on the North Yuba River, about 28 miles east of Marysville-Yuba City (Plate 1). The proposed Project and the Dark Day Boat Launching Facility are located on National Forest System lands managed by the Tahoe National Forest. From Sacramento take 1-80 to Highway 49 at Auburn, go North on 49 through Grass Valley-Nevada City to Camptonville, go west on E-20 (Marysville Road) to the turn off to the Dark Day launching facility. The access road is about 1/2 mile long. New Bullards Bar Reservoir has one other boat launching facility at Cottage Creek, which is located at the southwest end of the dam. The area surrounding the Project is described below.

1.1 Climate

The climate at the site is typical of the low mountain areas of California. Summers are hot and dry, while the winters are mild and wet. Winter temperatures are commonly in the thirty to fifty degree range, while summer temperatures often reach 100 degrees. Precipitation is about 60 inches per year, predominately in the form of rain. Due to weather patterns the predominate boating recreation season on New Bullards Bar Reservoir extends from about early May through mid October. However, persons fishing will be found all year round on the reservoir.

1.2 Population Centers

The closest towns to New Bullards Bar Reservoir are Camptonville and Challenge, five miles west and three miles east respectively. Larger urban areas from the reservoir include Oroville, approximately 25 miles to the north, Marysville-Yuba City, approximately 35 miles to the southwest, and Grass Valley-Nevada City, approximately 25 miles to the south. The closest major metropolitan area is Sacramento, which is approximately 85 miles to the southwest, about a one and one half hour drive.

1.3 Recreational Opportunities Near New Bullards Bar Reservoir

Two of the most concentrated outdoor recreational areas north and south of New Bullards Bar Reservoir are: Lake Tahoe to the southeast and Lake Shasta to the North. New Bullards Bar Reservoir is surrounded by the Tahoe and Plumas National Forests. These Forests provide ample opportunities for outdoor recreation, such as: boating, sailing, swimming, water sports, camping, fishing, hiking, biking, off-road vehicle use, rafting, recreational mining, site-seeing, picnicking, hunting, horseback riding, and driving for pleasure (Highway 49 is a California Scenic Highway and a National Forest Scenic Byway).

Other lake related opportunities in the area of New Bullards Bar Reservoir are listed in Table 1.30.

Table 1.30

Body of Water	Surface Acres	Developed Boat Launching Facilities	Popular Water Related Recreational Opportunities	Operator
Lake Almanor (100 miles northeast of NBBR*)	28,000	marina & ramps	skiing, boat rentals, jet skiing, fishing, swimming, pleasure boating	PG&E
Lake Oroville (32 miles southeast of NBBR)	15,500	2 marinas, 9 ramps & 10 car top boat launches	skiing, house boating, jet skiing, boat rentals, fishing, swimming, pleasure boating	California Department of Parks and Recreation
Little Grass Valley Reservoir (50 miles northwest of NBBR)	1,615	3 ramps	fishing, sailing, jet skiing	Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District
Sly Creek Reservoir (30 miles north of NBBR)	652	1 ramp, 1 cartop launch	fishing, sailing	Oroville-Wyandotte Irrigation District
Merle Collins Reservoir (12 miles southwest of NBBR)	1,000	1 ramp	fishing, skiing between 5/15 and 9/15 (house boats and personal watercraft are not allowed)	Browns Valley Irrigation District
Englebright Reservoir (24 miles southwest of NBBR)	815	marina, 2 ramps	boating for pleasure, houseboats and rentals, fishing, skiing	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jackson Meadows Reservoir (40 miles east of NBBR)	1,000	2 ramps	fishing, pleasure boating (houseboats not allowed)	Nevada Irrigation District

Scotts Flat Reservoir (28 miles south of NBBR)	750	marina, 2 ramps	fishing, skiing, pleasure boating, boat rentals (houseboats and jet skis not allowed)	Nevada Irrigation District
Rollins Reservoir (32 miles south of NBBR)	825	marina, 2 ramps	fishing, skiing, pleasure boating, boat rentals (houseboats and jet skis not allowed)	Nevada Irrigation District
Camp Far West Reservoir (36 miles southwest of NBBR)	2,000	marina, 2 ramps	fishing, skiing, swimming,	South Slitter Water District
Folsom Lake (60 miles south of NBBR1)	11,450	marina, 7 ramps	skiing, house boating, jet skiing, boat rentals, fishing, sailing, swimming, pleasure boating	California Department of Parks and Recreation

* = New Bullards Bar Reservoir

A comprehensive recreation resource study was conducted for New Bullards Bar Reservoir to develop the Revised Exhibit R (Recreation Plan required under FERC No. 2246), approved February 4, 1991. This study, which utilized customer use surveys in its development, describes some of the attributes of the reservoir that have attracted a steady increase in both daytime and overnight users to it, even during drought periods and when other lakes were seeing a decrease in overnight camp use. *"New Bullards Bar Reservoir provides the visitor with a large lake in a mostly undeveloped, scenic setting, yet with easy road access. The lake is particularly attractive to those seeking motorized boat oriented recreation. New Bullards Bar Reservoir offers a variety of boating experiences like other lakes, but provides a scenic setting of forests and remote canyons. At New Bullards Bar Reservoir, a visitor can chose to participate in the activity of their choice in either a developed setting near services or at a remote site offering solitude and a more primitive experience. "*

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT SITE

The Project is located approximately 500 feet west of the top of the existing Dark Day Boat Launching Facility and parking area, which is centrally located on the south shore of the New Bullards Bar Reservoir. The Dark Day Launching Facility is owned and operated by the U.S.D.A Forest Service. The immediate area around the Project site is described below.

2.1 New Bullards Bar Reservoir

New Bullards Bar Dam was completed in 1969 by the Yuba County Water Agency for the purpose of providing water for power generation, irrigation and domestic needs, flood control, and recreation.

The reservoir behind the 2,350 foot long 635 foot high concrete arch dam is over 13 miles long with 55 miles of shoreline at a full pool elevation of 1,955 feet. The minimum pool elevation is 1,735 feet. The normal water level fluctuation is 150 feet. It has a maximum surface area of 4,760 acres and a capacity of 960,000 acre feet of water. All the shoreline is publicly owned, however, the sides of the reservoir are typically steep and public access for boating and recreation is limited to two developed launching facilities and one undeveloped walk-in access at the end of Moran Road.

New Bullards Bar Reservoir is currently used for many types of boating and other recreation. Some speed limit restrictions are posted on the reservoir for public safety, near launching facilities and mooring areas, and for fisheries protection in certain coves. Recreation activities include: water siding, pleasure boating, houseboating, jet skiing, warm and cold water fishing, swimming, lake-side camping, developed camping, sailing, picnicking, hiking, and biking. The majority of the recreational use occurs between early May and mid October, though fishing and biking activities occur year round.

2.2 Existing Dark Day Boat Launching Facility

The Dark Day Boat Launching Facility is located centrally on the south shore of the New Bullards Bar Reservoir, four miles north of the dam. The facility, most of which was constructed in 1969, is comprised of the following features:

- 1,360 foot long concrete boat ramp
 - (1) upper 400 feet three lanes,
 - (2) middle 600 feet two lanes,
 - (3) lower 360 feet single lane.
- 60 foot long boarding float.
- Four-unit vault toilet.
- 2 picnic tables.
- 60 vehicle-trailer and 40 vehicle parking spaces.
- Associated signs and bulletin boards, including California Department of Boating and Waterways partnership sign.
- In the summer of 1999 (through a Cal. Dept. of Boating & Waterways grant);
 - (1) solar powered safety lighting will be installed at the top of the ramp,
 - (2) solar powered safety lighting will be installed both inside and outside of the restroom,
 - (3) the restroom will be made accessible to persons in wheelchairs,
 - (4) odor problems in the restroom will be reduced through active solar powered ventilation, and

(5) the existing parking lot will be sand slurry sealed and restriped;

- In the fall of 1999 (through a Cal. Dept. of Boating & Waterways grant) a debris diversion structure will be built to divert sediment away from the ramp, and a diversion ditch, constructed in FY 1984-85 under another project, will be cleaned out.

Previous California Department of Boating and Waterways actions at this facility include:

- Repave and stripe existing parking lot, extend the launching ramp, provide erosion control, improve restroom facility, and install boarding float (FY 1974-75).
- Erosion control alterations to hillside above the ramp (FY 1984-85).
- Construct new boarding float and repair single rail guidance system (FY 1986-87).

2.3 Other New Bullards Bar Reservoir Facilities

Launching Facilities:

- Cottage Creek - Located along the southwest corner of the dam, 2 lane 900 foot long concrete-paved boat ramp, four-unit vault toilet, picnic table, 56 vehicle-trailer parking spaces;
- Dark Day (described above);

Camping (by reservation only, through marina):

- Schoolhouse Campground - Located approximately three miles north of the dam north off Marysville Road (0.5 miles from shoreline), 56 camping units (44 single-unit, 11 double, 1 triple);
- Dark Day Campground - Located approximately four miles north of the dam on Dark Day Road (0.2 miles from shoreline), 16 single family camping units;
- Hornswoggle Group Campground - Located approximately three miles north of the dam south off Marysville Road (0.6 miles from shoreline), 5 group camping units (4- 25 person capacity, 1- 50 person capacity). There currently are plans to add one additional group site in the fall of 1999;
- Garden Point Boat Access Campground - Located on the peninsula at the junction of the North Yuba and Willow creek arms of the reservoir, 20 camping units (12 single-unit, 4 double);
- Madrone Cove Boat Access Campground - Located on the west shore of the upper North Yuba arm of the reservoir, 10 single camping units;
- Dispersed Shoreline Boat Access Camping - Undesignated locations along the shoreline, by permit only (44 permits available). These are available only when the water elevation is 15 feet below

treeline, due to fire hazard. Private portable chemical toilets are required (can be rented from manna).

Picnic:

- Dark Day Picnic Area - Located along Dark Day Road from 10 to 40 feet above maximum reservoir surface. There are 14 picnic units;
- Cottage Creek Overflow Campground - Located off of County Road 169 approximately 0.5 miles from its intersection with Marysville Road near the dam. This facility had been closed for a number of years due to low use. It is currently used for overflow camping when shoreline camping is not available (when there is not at least 15 feet from water surface to treeline) and when the other camping facilities are at capacity (most commonly occurs during the Memorial Day weekend). There are 30 single units.

Marina:

- Emerald Cove Marina - Located directly adjacent to the Cottage Creek Boat Ramp on the north side of the dam. The marina consists of a floating general store and snack bar, overnight boat slips (30) and mooring buoys (80 slots), gasoline pumps and a floating dump station. Rental houseboats, fishing boats, and patio boats are available. The marina also handles all the reservations for all the camping permits around the reservoir.

Other:

- Floating Restrooms - There are four two-unit floating comfort stations (vault-type chemical recirculating) located on the reservoir.
- Sunset Vista Point - This scenic point overlooks the dam near the southeast corner of the reservoir. It is also a trailhead for the Bullards Trail. There is four-unit vault toilet and parking for 20 vehicles
- Bullards Trail System - There are over 20 miles of trails that stretch along the southeast side of the reservoir (from Sunset Vista Point to Highway 49 and Marysville Road). Five trails make up the Bullards Trail System. Bullard's Trail runs along the edge of the reservoir about 60 feet from high water. The other trails either parallel Marysville Road or connect these to Bullards Trail. These trails are popular with the campers and mountain bikers.
- Undeveloped Road Access - There are only three public vehicle access points on the reservoir, the two boat launching facilities and Moran Road. Moran Road accesses the west edge of the reservoir at Moran Cove. In the fall of 1999 the facility will consist of a gravel parking area for 6-8 vehicles, bulletin board, and road blockade approximately 300 feet from the maximum water surface elevation. The public can hike down to recreate at the water's edge or can launch water craft that can be carried on foot.
- Associated signs and buoys.